

April  
2019

National  
Independent  
Fire Alarm  
Distributors

# NIFADNews

## this issue

President's Letter P. 1

Codes & Standards Update **P.2-4**

2019 Conference Information **P.5**

## Calendar of Events

**AFAA National  
Codes Conference**  
May 14 - 17, 2019  
Lake Buena Vista, FL

**NIFAD  
Annual Meeting**  
June 15-17, 2019  
San Antonio, TX

**NFPA  
Convention**  
June 17-20, 2019  
San Antonio, TX

*Mark your  
calendar  
and plan  
to attend!*



## From the President's Desk

By Anna Gavin, NIFAD President

Hello NIFAD members! I am very much looking forward to our meeting in June. Jared Ryan and the board have been working to secure speakers and prepare topics. We will follow up with our Distributor Members before the meeting to request the town hall questions.

I am also looking forward to our meeting being in San Antonio this year. This location change up feels like it will be a good one. The sunshine and energy of Vegas and more affordable rooms than Chicago or Boston. We will be meeting right around the Riverwalk

area where there is much to do and see.

While the meeting falls on Father's Day this year (which could not be helped due to NFPA's timing), I hope that all of you dads can find time to spend with your families prior to coming to the meeting. We have had a great response from sponsors and hope to have a very successful meeting so the more attendance we get the better.

Start making your plans now and we will follow with an agenda and registration shortly. See you in June!

## NIFAD Board

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If you have any questions, concerns or feedback throughout the year, please feel free to reach out to any of these members.

Additionally, if you have any member referrals, please forward them to any board member for follow up.

# Codes & Standards Updates by Richard Roberts

## State/Municipal Code Adoption:

- a. Mayor Rahm Emanuel has initiated a program to modernize Chicago's Construction Codes by requiring the Building Department to align, where appropriate, with the latest edition of the International Fire Code (IFC) and International Existing Building Code (IEBC). This is an important initiative is needed because the Chicago Fire Code contains some of the most outdated requirements in the United States. Adopting the newest edition of the ICC Codes will enhance public life safety.
- b. The New York City Department of Buildings (DOB) is seeking input from industry stakeholders to promulgate rules for the implementation of a 2016 ordinance that requires natural gas detection in residential occupancies in the City (see item 4 relating to a possible new NFPA standard). On 12/13/18 the DOB held a meeting with industry stakeholders to seek input before writing rules for the installation of natural gas alarms in residential occupancies as required by Local Law 157 (2016). Representatives from UL, NFPA and NEMA attended the meeting. Attendees discussed the feasibility of expanding the requirements to include detection in commercial applications as they move forward with implementation of the Local Law for residential occupancies.

## NFPA 1221, *Standard for the Installation, Maintenance, and Use of Emergency Services Communications Systems*

- Tentative Interim Amendment (TIA):
  - The TIA seeking to amend the BDA requirement for the 2019 edition of NFPA 1221 was rejected by the Technical Committee
  - As written, the TIA was seeking to require BDA riser cables and equipment to be installed in a 2-hour rated enclosure as well as other problems that would have resulted in fewer buildings having approved radio coverage. If approved the TIA would have reduced the safety of both emergency responders and the public.
  - A TIA is the NFPA process to amend a provision in an NFPA standard after it has been published.

## Development of Future Codes that will enhance public life safety are as follows:

- Potential New NFPA Gas Standard:
  - NFPA is currently soliciting input on the need for a new natural gas detection standard after receiving a request from the American Gas Association because no such document exists. The standard would include requirements for the installation, testing and maintenance of alarms and detectors.
  - There appears to be a need for a standard because on 9/13/18 more than 60 gas fires occurred in Massachusetts that killed a teenager, injured 25 others, and destroyed or damaged dozens of homes. The incidents occurred after the pressure in pipes delivering natural gas to residents in four communities spiked dramatically, according to the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).

## Codes & Standards Updates Continued

### NFPA Fire Protection Research Foundation (FPRF)

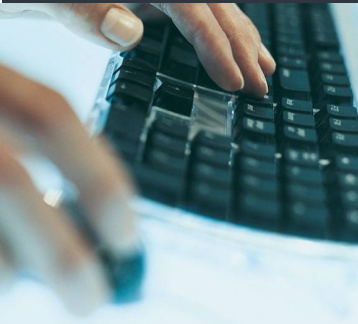
- BDA Survivability Research:
  - A project request has been submitted to the FPRF which seeks to determine the performance impact of public safety BDA system cables and equipment installed in a 2-hour rated enclosure during a fire and to develop a temperature rating specification
  - A Request for Proposal (RFP) from the NFPA Fire Protection Research Foundation (FPRF) will be sent to numerous universities to conduct a literature review to determine the performance impact of high temperatures on BDA system cables and equipment. The tentative schedule for the research project will be for RFP's to be sent in April, then contractor selection in September and an estimated completion in December.
  - The survivability research is needed because many jurisdictions and the 2019 edition of NFPA 1221, *Standard for the Installation, Maintenance, and Use of Emergency Services Communications Systems*, require BDA riser cables and the repeater to be installed in a 2-hour rated enclosure. The cost of implementing these requirements will result in fewer buildings having approved radio coverage and will reduce the safety of emergency responders and the public.

### Underwriters Laboratories (UL):

- UL 268, *Smoke Detectors for Fire Alarm Systems*:
  - Twenty-two smoke detector proposals for UL 268 were approved by the Standards Technical Panel (STP). Several key proposals are as follows:
    - Special Application for High Sensitivity Detectors: Provides an optional special application mode that permits the cooking nuisance test to be ignored. The default mode is for the smoke detector to pass all test
    - Do/No-Go Flaming PU Fire Test: Requires the flaming polyurethane (PU) foam test after completion of the cooking nuisance (hamburger) test. The new test will ensure a detector will detect a real fire after ignoring the cooking nuisance test.
    - Field Upgradeable Firmware: Adds a set of criteria to allow installed smoke detectors to receive firmware updates. Previously, smoke detectors with embedded firmware have not been allowed to update the firmware once the product has left the factory.
    - Additional CO Stability Tests: Adds a new test to for multi-criteria smoke detectors employing CO sensors. The test is



Longtime NIFAD member and friend, Allen Fritts, died at the age of 68 on March 18, 2019. Allen was employed my Honeywell for over 30 years. Allen was always a generous supporter and active participant of NIFAD. He will be missed by all who knew him. R.I.P.



## Codes & Standards Updates Continued

designed to ignore CO “background concentration levels” that are common within the atmosphere that produce unwanted alarm activations.

### Parkland Florida High School Shooting:

- Commission Report:
  - A Florida Department of Law Enforcement Commission Report on the tragic 2017 Parkland Florida High School mass shooting concludes the active shooter did not activate the fire alarm system by pull stations.
  - After the 2017 mass shooting there has been a movement in many jurisdictions across the U.S. seeking to eliminate pull stations in K-12 schools because it was thought the shooter activated the fire alarm system by using pull stations. The report concludes the fire alarm system was not activated by pull stations. Rather, the system was activated by either smoke from the gun and/or dust created by the ceiling tiles moving (see page 47 or page 66). Please use the attached Report if legislation or regulations are introduced seeking to eliminate pull stations.
  - Various model codes already permit pull stations to be eliminated in new and existing K-12 schools.
    - New Schools: Pull stations are permitted to be eliminated where one of the below exceptions apply:
      - In buildings with an occupant load less than 50
      - The interior corridors, auditoriums, cafeterias and gymnasiums are provided with smoke detectors and shops and laboratories are protected by heat detectors
      - The building is provided throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system
    - Existing Schools: Pull stations are permitted to be eliminated where one of the below exceptions apply:
      - In accordance with the new building requirements

### NIFAD Website

Check the website for current news and information on events for our organization.

Newsletters, conference brochures, industry links and conference registration forms can also be found on the website,

NIFAD.com.

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# NIFAD Annual Meeting



June 15-19, 2019

Hyatt Regency River Walk  
San Antonio

NIFAD has sleeping rooms  
blocked June 15-17, 2019.

Our room rate is \$169 single or double

The Hyatt Regency River Walk San Antonio is  
9 miles from the airport, no resort fees,  
complimentary guest room internet,  
located on the River Walk.

More information available in Spring 2019.

